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A radio conversation between Miss Ruth Van Deman, Bureau of Home Economics, and Mr. Morse Salisbury, Office of Information, broadcast Thursday, July 14, 1938, in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, by the National Broadcasting Company and a network of 93 associate radio stations.

MORSE SALISBURY:

And now for our regular Thursday report from the Bureau of Home Economics. Here's Ruth Van Deman looking as cool as a cucumber- - -

RUTH VAN DEMAN:

Just as cool as a cucumber that's been out in the hot sun.

SALISBURY:

Well, you look cool. Maybe it's that green dress.

VAN DEMAN:

That's it. The psychology of color in clothes. Now, to me, your blue tie- - -

SALISBURY:

What about it?

VAN DEMAN:

It's as cool as an ocean wave.

SALISBURY:

Lady, no color psychology can make me believe that a tie pulled tight around a man's neck is cool.

VAN DEMAN:

Start a reform then. Leave it off.

SALISBURY:

I'm no reformer, on that subject. I'm too conventional.

VAN DEMAN:

You're not like Clarice Scott with the children's clothes.

SALISBURY:

No ma'am.

VAN DEMAN:

She's had the courage, you know, to design children's clothes without collars to wrinkle up around children's necks. And with cool open sleeves, and no tight leg bands.

SALISBURY:

Yes, I admire and respect, and commend and congratulate Miss Scott for what she's done on children's clothes. I wish she'd do the same for men's. And we had the courage to wear them.

(over)

VAN DEMAN:

I was looking at her latest designs this morning. I believe they are working a kind of quiet reform in children's clothes - - - making them more comfortable for the youngsters to wear, and easier for mothers to make and to launder.

SALISBURY:

All part of your program on the better use of cotton goods.

VAN DEMAN:

That's right. There was one dress, especially, Miss Scott was showing me, for a little girl of 2 or 3. It's made of dotted Swiss --- delicate pink with white dots --- as cool as a dish of strawberry ice cream.

SALISBURY:

Not getting a little mixed in your metaphors, are you?

VAN DEMAN:

Oh, maybe. And another very dainty little frock of lavender-and-white check with a kind of open inverted cuff around the armholes instead of sleeves, like angel's wings sprouting - - -

SALISBURY:

Wasn't there anything for bad little boys?

VAN DEMAN:

Oh yes, plenty. But it's part of Miss Scott's theory that some of the temper tantrums youngsters have in hot weather comes from clothes that are not cut and fitted right. Maybe it's only an abbreviated little sunsuit junior's wearing. But even that's likely to rub him the wrong way if the leg bands are too tight --- or if the shoulder straps cut in and leave red marks on his skin -- or if they're so loose they keep sliding off and getting into his way.

SALISBURY:

Miss Scott goes in for "action" features.

VAN DEMAN:

Absolutely.

SALISBURY:

Well, what about this fad for sunsuits on children? Isn't it possible to overdo that?

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, very easily. We don't know all there is to know, by any means, about the effect of sun on the human body.

SALISBURY:

But there is pretty general agreement though that ultra violet rays shining directly on the skin do help to manufacture vitamin D.

VAN DEMAN:

True. And a certain amount of that is undoubtedly beneficial. That's why our clothing people invented the children's sunsuit with an open mesh top-- to let through the ultra violet rays. But a child's skin is very delicate and easily sunburned. And this hot July sunshine scorches pretty quickly.

SALISBURY:

Yes. I noticed that down at the beach on the Fourth.

VAN DEMAN:

Still peeling?

SALISBURY:

Just finished.

VAN DEMAN:

Well, after a child's been out in the sunshine in one of these little open-air garments and then comes into the house to eat dinner, he may cool off too quickly or too much. Some of the sudden digestive upsets children have in summer may start that way. So Miss Scott's designed matching jackets for the boys' outfits and dresses for the girls', to go with the sunsuits. They button in the front, so a youngster can put them on himself - - -

SALISBURY:

Self-help plan.

VAN DEMAN:

Exactly.

SALISBURY:

Ruth, are the patterns for those children's clothes still handled by the regular pattern companies?

VAN DEMAN:

Yes. After Miss Scott works out the designs the pattern companies reproduce them and put them in commercial distribution.

SALISBURY:

Following the same principle our plant and animal research people use to get their new hybrids to the public.

VAN DEMAN:

Just the same, exactly.

SALISBURY:

And you can supply anybody who wants it with a list of those commercial pattern numbers?

VAN DEMAN:

Yes. We have all of them in a mimeographed sheet with sketches to show what the garments look like.

SALISBURY:

And then there's a printed bulletin with pictures of children wearing the clothes. "Modeling" them if that's the word.

VAN DEMAN:

They aren't exactly professional models. Our camera caught these youngsters in the sand pile and out in the yard.

SALISBURY:

All the better. And the title of that bulletin as I remember it, is "Fabrics and Designs for Children's Clothes".

VAN DEMAN:

Right.

SALISBURY:

I'll repeat that in a moment. But going back to that idea of color in children's clothes. I've been very much interested in Miss Scott's suggestion of bright colors on children as a protection against traffic accidents.

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, that's for the winter playsuits especially --- when the roads are bare and brown.

SALISBURY:

But isn't it a good idea to have bright-colored swim suits for children playing on the beach?

VAN DEMAN:

Very good. Swim suits or sun suits. Much easier to keep an eye on them and see when they're getting into danger. --- Well, Morse, when we started out I thought I'd pass along some suggestions about laundering some of the hot weather dress fabrics and taking out stains. But there's always so much to say about the children's clothes.

SALISBURY:

Come again next Thursday.

VAN DEMAN:

Thank you. I'll do that.

SALISBURY:

And I'll repeat that offer Miss Van Doman made to send a list of the pattern numbers for the children's clothes designed in the Bureau of Home Economics, and the printed bulletin "Fabrics and Designs for Children's clothes". Just drop a card to Miss Ruth Van Doman, Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture, here in Washington, D. C., and ask for the information on children's clothes.